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ABSTRACT

A survey of the status of language usage in the Ivory Coast begins with an overview of the usage patterns of French, the official language, and the five most commonly used native languages: Jula, Anyi-Baoule, Senoufo, Bete, and Dan. Recent Ivorian efforts at language planning, development, and research are also highlighted. A matrix follows that rates these six languages on: (1) their usage rating using State Department classifications; (2) increase and decrease trends by the year 2000; (3) chief of state use in addressing the populace; (4) use in armed forces, government, court and diplomatic communications, written and oral; (5) use as a language of instruction or required language in higher education, on the secondary and elementary levels, and in adult education; (6) use in the popular press, radio and television broadcasting, and film; (7) business and professional use, written and oral; (8) use in intellectual circles; (9) the alphabet situation; (10) the status of indigenous literature; (11) use in public signs and notices; and (12) the availability of instructional materials and dictionaries in the native languages for use in English as a second language. Explanatory notes give the number and population percentages using the languages, the type of alphabet used, and specific instructional materials titles. A selected bibliography is also included. (MSE)

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Language/Area Reference Center

COUNTRY STATUS REPORT:

IVORY COAST

June 1984

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Center for Applied Linguistics/LARC
Country Status Report
June 1984
Ivory Coast - 1, Overview

The only official language of the Ivory Coast is French. It is the language of administration, education and for all formal or official functions. The other languages in the Ivory Coast which are significant in terms of numbers of native speakers or of use are: Jula, Anyi-Baoule, Senoufo, Bete and Dan. These languages have gained official recognition vis-a-vis the government's language development efforts.

While French is the only official language of the country, it is difficult to determine the actual number of French-speaking Ivorians. Census data variously places the figure at between 25% to 95% depending on location. A reasonable estimate is that French is spoken at some level of competency by about 35% of the population. Jula is the most widely used indigenous language. It is a lingua franca in much of the country and is widely used in trade and commerce and in urban areas. As a mother tongue it is estimated to be spoken by only about 16% of the population, though surveys have shown it may be known by about 60-65% of the population. Anyi-Baoule has the greatest number of native speakers, estimated at greater than 20% of the population, but this language figures second to Jula in its use country-wide as a lingua franca. The local variety of French, a piginized form referred to as Popular Ivorian French, is gaining as a lingua franca. It had become the predominant lingua franca of the urban centers, the southern part of the country and of modern employment, particularly of the unskilled labor force. Jula dominates as a lingua franca in the north and in traditional areas of trade and commerce.

It is estimated that about sixty different languages are spoken in the Ivory Coast. In the last several years, the government has taken an active interest in language development efforts and has encouraged language research. These efforts include language and dialect surveys, descriptions of languages, and the preparation of language teaching materials. Since independence, there has been some semi-official use of Ivorian vernaculars when there was no other alternative to meeting political goals. Radio broadcasts of national news and annoucements have been made in the more widespread indigenous languages and this usage has been extended to television. The government considered teaching some indigenous languages at the secondary level and although this has not happened, courses in Jula and Baoule are offered at the university level. There was also an experimental pre-school in the vernaculars project which has now ended. Classes in adult literacy are offered in some of the vernaculars as well as in French.

Despite the increased attention paid to the languages of the Ivory Coast, it is unlikely that any will achieve official national status beyond the development efforts. Certain languages may become candidates for co-national or regional status, but no one vernacular predominates nationally. French has played a significant role in unifying a culturally and linguistically diverse country. Although increased recognition and use of the Ivorian languages enhances their position, French remains the prestige form toward which to strive. Due to its privileged position, there is even some indication that French is replacing the vernaculars in more formal styles of speech. Many Ivorians now feel that the promotion of French has been at the cost of traditional language and culture. The policy of French as the only official language does pose problems for the development and maintenance of Ivorian languages and cultures. Nevertheless, French continues to provide practical advantages and aid in maintaining national unity, providing access to world technology, and positively affecting the national budget by eliminating the need to produce documents, texts, and all forms of official, administrative and educational materials in multiple languages.

Center for Applied Linguistics/LARC
Country Status Report
June 1984
Ivory Coast - 2, Use Matrix

IVORY COAST

Languages

Factoids	French	Jula	Anyi-Baoule	Senoufo	Bete	Dan
1. Usage rating*	1	3	3	4	4	4
2. Increase/decrease	3	1	2	1	2	2
3. Chief of State use?	1	0	0	0	0	0
4. Armed Forces/written	1	0	0	0	0	0
5. Armed Forces/oral	1	3	3	4	4	4
6. Government/written	1	0	0	0	0	0
7. Government/oral, national	1	0	0	0	0	0
8. Government/oral, local	1	3	3	3	3	3
9. Court/written	1	0	0	0	0	0
10. Court/oral	1	3	3	3	3	3
11. Diplomatic use?	1	0	0	0	0	0
12. Higher education	1	0	0	0	0	0
13. Higher ed: required?	0	0	0	0	0	0
14. Secondary education	1	0	0	0	0	0
15. Secondary: required?	1	0	0	0	0	0
16. Primary education	1	0	0	0	0	0
17. Primary: required?	1	0	0	0	0	0
18. Adult education	1	2	2	4	4	2
19. Popular press use	1	0	0	0	0	3
20. Transmission across borders?	1	0	0	0	0	0
21. Use in radio broadcasting	1	1	1	1	1	2
22. Use in TV broadcasting	1	1	1	1	1	1
23. Use in film	2	0	0	0	0	0
24. Business/professional/written	1	0	0	0	0	0
25. Business/professional/oral	2	1	3	3	3	3
26. Use in intellectual circles	1	0	0	0	0	0
27. Alphabet situation*	1	1	1	1	1	1
28. Status of literature	1	2	2	2	0	2
29. Use in signs?	1	0	0	0	0	0
30. Teaching materials*	1	2	2	0	0	0
31. Bilingual dictionaries*	1	0	0	0	0	0

Notes:

Matrix figures are explained on following pages

? = information unavailable within time frame of project

- = not applicable

* = footnotes on following pages

FOOTNOTES

1. 1984 ESTIMATES, NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPEAKERS

Language	Number of native speakers	Percentage of population
French	475,000	5.8%
Jula	1,310,320	16 %
Anyi-Baoule	1,637,900	20 %
Senoufo	982,740	12 %
Bete	696,100	8.5%
Dan	524,130	6.4%

27. TYPE OF ALPHABET USED

Language	Alphabet
French	Roman
Jula	Roman with additional characters
Anyi-Baoule	Roman with additional characters
Senoufo	Roman with additional characters
Bete	Roman with additional characters
Dan	Roman with additional characters

30. TEACHING MATERIALS FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Language	Texts
Jula	Long, Ronald W. and Raoul S. Diomande. Basic Dyula. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Intensive Language Center, 1968. Also: Grammatical Outline and Exercises. Introductory Exercise Book. Dialogs and Variations. Phrase Sheets. Intermediate Lessons I & II. Comprehension Workbook.
Anyi-Baoule	Day, Richard R. and Albert B. Saraka. An Introduction to Spoken Baoule. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1968.
	Kouame, Kouame and Mary Griffen. Baule Text. Dartmouth College Peace Corps Training Center, 1967.

31. DICTIONARIES FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS

At present, there are no known bilingual dictionaries in English and any of the indigenous languages of the Ivory Coast. The existing dictionaries are principally in French and the indigenous languages.

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Country Status Report
June 1984
Explanation of Matrix Figures - a

1. Usage rating, using the State Department classifications
   1: Official language, most widely used.
   2: Official language, not most widely used.
   3: Widely used language, but not official. (Over 10% of population)
   4: Unofficial language used by significant minority (but less than 3)
   5: Unofficial language used by influential minority
      FOOTNOTE: NUMBERS OF SPEAKERS, PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION

2. Increase/decrease trends by the year 2000
   1: Number of native speakers will increase in proportion
   2: Number of native speakers will remain proportionally constant
   3: Number of native speakers will decrease in proportion

3. Chief of State use, in addressing populace: YES (1) NO (0)

4. Armed Forces written communications
   1: Only language used in official communiques
   2: One of the languages used in official communiques
   0: Not used in official communiques

5. Armed Forces oral communications
   1: Used on all levels
   2: Used among officers only
   3: Used among multi-lingual NCO's and troops
   4: Used among monolingual troops only
   0: Not used

6. Written government communications
   1: Only language used in official communications
   2: One of the languages used in official communications
   0: Not used in official communications

7. Oral government communications/national level
   1: Official language spoken in national assembly
   2: One of the official languages spoken in national assembly
   0: Not used in government

8. Oral government communications/local level
   1: Official language in local government
   2: One of the official languages used in local government
   3: Allowed in local government proceedings, translated into official language
   0: Not used in local government

9. Court use in written communications
   1: Only language used in official communications
   2: One of the languages used in official communications
   0: Not used

Center for Applied Linguistics/LARC
Country Status Report
June 1984
Explanation of Matrix Figures - b

10. Court use in oral communications
    1: Only official language used in court
    2: One of the official languages used in court
    3: Allowed in courts, translated into official language(s)
    0: Not used in courts

11. Diplomatic use in notes to other countries: YES (1) NO (0)

12. Use in higher education
    1: Official medium of instruction
    2: Unofficial medium of instruction
    0: Not used

13. Language taught as subject in required courses in higher education:
    YES (1) NO (0)

14. Use in secondary education
    1: Official medium of instruction
    2: Unofficial medium of instruction
    0: Not used as medium of instruction

15. Language taught as subject in required courses on secondary level?
    YES (1) NO (0)

16. Use in primary education
    1: Official medium of instruction
    2: Unofficial medium of instruction
    0: Not used as medium of instruction

17. Language taught as subject in required courses on primary level?
    YES (1) NO (0)

18. Language use in adult education
    1: Used in oral and written technical instruction
    2: Used in oral and written life skills instruction
    3: Used in oral life skills instruction
    4: Used in literacy classes only
    0: Not used in adult informal education

19. Language use in popular press
    1: Used in publications throughout country
    2: Used in centrally-based publications with national distribution
    3: Used only in regional and local publications
    4: Used in clandestine publications only
    0: Not used

Center for Applied Linguistics/LARC
Country Status Report
June 1984
Explanation of Matrix Figures - c

20. Language used in radio/TV transmission across national borders?
YES (1) NO (0)

21. Language use in radio broadcasting
1: Language used broadcasting thoughout country
2: Language used in centrally-based national broadcasts
3: Language used in local broadcasting only
3: Language used in clandestine broadcasting only
0: Language not used in radio broadcasting

22. Language use in TV broadcasting
1: Language used in telecasting throughout country
2: Language used in centrally-based national telecasting
3: Language used regional and local telecasting only
0: Language not used in TV

23. Language use in film
1: Language used in indigenous film-making
2: Foreign-language films dubbed/subtitled into language
0: Language not used in films

24. Business/Professional use - written
1: Sole official language in business and professional communications
2: One of the official languages in business and professional communication
0: Not used

25. Business/Professional use - oral
1: Used in trade and commerce throughout country
2: Used in national trade and commerce only
3: Used only in local trade and commerce

26. Language use in intellectual circles
1: Language used in indigenous scholarly publications
2: Language used in formal scholarly discussion
0: Language not used

27. Alphabet situation
1: Established standardized alphabet exists.
2: Alphabet developed, no standardization
3: Competing alphabets exist
0: No alphabet exists
FOOTNOTE: TYPE OF ALPHABET USED

28. Status of indigenous literature
1: Established written tradition exists
2: Literature tradition emerging
3: Popular literature exists
0: No written literature exists

29. Language used in official public signs, notices: YES (1) NO (0)

Center for Applied Linguistics/LARC
Country Status Report
June 1984
Explanation of Matrix Figures - d

30. Teaching materials for English speakers
    1: Wide range of teaching materials exists
    2: Narrow range of teaching materials exists
    0: No teaching materials exist
    FOOTNOTE: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

31. Dictionaries for English speakers
    1: Wide range of bilingual dictionaries exists
    2: Narrow range of dictionaries exists
    0: No dictionaries exist
    FOOTNOTE: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY